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**CUBAN POSTURE ON ISSUES RELATED
TO THE NORMALIZATION OF
RELATIONS WITH THE US**

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CUBAN POSTURE ON ISSUES RELATED TO THE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH THE US

KEY JUDGMENTS

- Normalization of relations would serve Cuba's economic interests and, on balance, its political interests as well; but more fundamentally, Castro is seeking US acknowledgment of the legitimacy of the Cuban revolution.
- Castro is interested in normalizing relations with the US, but not at any price. He must be able credibly to represent the negotiations as having been arranged essentially on his terms.
- While there is some flexibility in Cuba's demand that the US lift trade restrictions as a precondition for negotiation, the Cubans cannot be expected to back down very far. If Castro cannot obtain compliance with the essence of this precondition, he would probably decide that the cost of normalization is too great.
- Cuba's insistence on being dealt with as an equal in negotiations is intended to convey its determination not to allow essential elements of its foreign or domestic policies to become issues of negotiation. These would include: Cuba's relationship with the Soviet Union, support of "progressive" governments and revolutionary movements, and Cuban political prisoners.
- The Soviets apparently favor normalization of relations, but they do not appear to be exerting pressure on the Cubans to come to terms with the US.
- Another spectacular act of violence by exile terrorists could pose a major problem for negotiations.

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- The Cubans have acknowledged the principle of compensation for expropriated property, but will meet US demands for compensation with their own claims for damages caused by US actions. Cuba's ability to finance any compensation is extremely limited, and any repayment would probably have to be facilitated by US credits at very favorable terms.
- Castro would almost certainly reject any US demands that Cuban troops be withdrawn from Angola and insist on Cuba's right to provide aid to legitimate governments and movements of national liberation.
- Cuba is unlikely to change its position on Puerto Rican independence, but would probably show some flexibility on this subject in the context of negotiations.
- While the Cubans will probably be willing to discuss certain human rights issues (e.g., repatriation of American citizens, reunification of families, emigration, and visits), they will almost certainly reject any discussion of Cuban political prisoners.
- Cuba is probably willing to renegotiate the antihijacking agreement, but only if the US takes adequate steps to curtail terrorism by Cuban exiles residing in the US.
- The Cubans will consider their relationship with the Soviets nonnegotiable, but may be willing to sign the Treaty of Tlatelolco providing for a Latin American nuclear-free zone under certain conditions.
- Removal of US restrictions on direct trade with Cuba would satisfy much, if not most, of Cuba's objectives. The remaining Cuban goals (return of Guantanamo, restoration of Most Favored Nation (MFN) status, cessation of overflights) have a lower priority, and can be negotiated at a more leisurely pace, from their point of view.
- Even if US-Cuban relations are normalized under the best of circumstances, they are not likely to be without friction and Castro's fundamental antipathy to US interests in Latin America and elsewhere can be expected to continue.

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DISCUSSION

I. BACKGROUND

1. There is little question that Fidel Castro and most other important figures in the Cuban leadership would welcome the normalization of relations with the US.¹ Cuba's economic interests would clearly be served by reestablishing trade and, on balance, normalization would benefit Castro politically as well. Securing a US decision to restore ties may be Castro's most fundamental objective for pursuing rapprochement, since in his view, it would be a signal to the rest of the world that the US had finally acknowledged the legitimacy of the Cuban revolution.

2. The extent to which Castro can actively seek to open a dialogue is limited by his long-held and frequently-expressed preconditions (removal of trade restrictions, and treatment as an equal) for beginning talks and by strong emotional constraints. In effect, Castro wants tacit acknowledgment by the US that he has prevailed despite US efforts to bring about his defeat, and he will not take any steps which might be construed as placing him in the role of supplicant. Castro and the rest of the Cuban leadership are unalterably convinced that Cuba is the aggrieved party in the US-Cuba dispute and that the primary responsibility to resolve the problem rests with the US. If he can obtain normalized relations only at the price of relinquishing the essence of his preconditions, the psychological victory would be denied to him, and he would probably decide that the cost is too great. Should negotiations falter, Castro will try to place the onus for failure on the US.

3. The weight of Cuban interests would favor normalization but certainly not at any price. Castro is interested, but not anxious. For him, the greatest benefits of restored relations would lie not so much in the area of economic advantages as in the explicit acceptance by the US of the Cuban revolution as a fait accompli with which it is willing to live.

4. The question of fishing rights within the 200-mile economic zone is excluded from this discussion because of its highly technical nature and because it

¹ In contrast to full diplomatic and trade relations, normalization of relations implies the kind of relations the United States has with East European countries in which we accord Most Favored Nation status and facilitate credits.

could be resolved relatively rapidly at the beginning of negotiations.

Cuban Interest in Relations with the US

5. Despite the declining effectiveness of US efforts to isolate Castro's Cuba, the opprobrium directed by the US against Cuba for its support of revolutionary activities elsewhere retains some residual force. The restoration of full diplomatic and trade relations between Cuba and the US would be a symbolic act of considerable importance, and it would inevitably influence the policies of other nations toward Cuba, particularly within Latin America and the Caribbean where only 11 out of 26 nations currently have relations with Havana. Normalization of relations would confer a large measure of respectability on Castro and remove a constraint which has helped keep a number of other governments arrayed in opposition to Cuba. Many have their own reasons for regarding the Cubans with suspicion (e.g., Brazil, Nicaragua, the Dominican Republic, and Guatemala). Some would nonetheless be likely to expand ties and cooperate on specific matters of mutual interest, even in the absence of formal relations. Costa Rica's recent decision to establish consular ties with Cuba was probably greatly influenced by a belief that US attitudes toward Cuba had changed and is indicative of other changes that would be likely to occur if US-Cuban ties were restored. The effect of normalized Cuban relations with the US on countries outside the hemisphere would probably be less marked. Castro's stature in international organizations such as the UN and the Nonaligned Movement would be perceptibly enhanced, although he would lose some of his appeal as a martyr.

6. Cuban interest in seeking normalization has been heightened by economic difficulties as world sugar prices have plummeted to new lows after a relatively short period of extremely high levels. The crunch has necessitated a cutback of Cuba's goals in its five-year development plan (formulated while sugar prices stood at record highs). It also has forced renegotiation or deferral of contracted purchases of capital goods from Western countries, despite the availability of lines of credit. The proportion of Cuba's export trade that has gone to noncommunist

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countries fell from about 30 percent in 1975 to an estimated 20 percent in 1976. The dollar value of this trade has been cut almost in half (from \$1.125 billion in 1975 to about \$600 million in 1976), largely as a result of falling sugar prices. Exports will probably stagnate at \$600 million in 1977. Cuba is facing increasing difficulties in marketing sugar in noncommunist countries, particularly since Japan has shifted much of its purchases to other suppliers and Spain has become increasingly self-sufficient. Imports from the noncommunist countries dropped from \$1.793 billion in 1975 to \$1.250 billion in 1976 and will probably be only \$800 million in 1977.

7. Cuba's favorable sugar arrangement with the USSR has previously made it possible to market all of the sugar it has available for export. But exclusion from the US market will make it difficult to find hard currency customers for planned expansion of output through 1980, particularly when value of sales to other Western markets are declining. Moreover, if a new International Sugar Agreement (ISA) assigns export quotas, sugar prices may rise, but Cuba would encounter even more difficulty in increasing hard currency sales. It would not be able to sell much nonquota sugar—even at discounted prices—if all the major importers (including the US) joined the ISA. Another problem would arise if a new US sugar law should reestablish country quotas and exclude Cuba, thus making it more difficult to accommodate sizable Cuban sugar imports at a later date without antagonizing other exporting countries whose quotas would necessarily be cut. Cuba would be in a much better position if it could sell to the US on an equal basis with other exporters when either the new ISA or a new US sugar law came into effect. All things being equal, the US might absorb as much as a million tons annually of Cuban sugar, which at current prices would be worth about \$190 million.

8. On the import side, the US trade embargo has made it more difficult and costly for Cuba to acquire needed capital goods (particularly those involving advanced technology available only from Western suppliers) and certain foodstuffs. This problem has to a large extent been alleviated by the removal of restrictions on trade with other countries and on sales by foreign subsidiaries of US transnational corporations. Even so, certain types of technology are available only in the US. US-made products remain highly regarded in Cuba, and both proximity and tradition would favor direct trade by US-based firms if all obstacles were removed.

9. A Commerce Department study prepared in early 1976, when sugar prices were above present levels, estimated that total trade (i.e., the sum of both exports and imports) between the US and Cuba could reach \$600-\$700 million annually under unrestricted trade conditions (including MFN status for Cuba). In order to realize this full potential, a number of major US legal and political impediments would have to be removed, and the value of goods that Cuba could purchase from the US would presumably be reduced by any compensation payments for US claims, unless Cuba were granted credits at very favorable terms. The actual amount of total trade, at least in the initial stages, would probably be considerably smaller than the \$600 million figure.

The Costs for Castro

10. Restoration of relations with the US would not be without cost for Cuba. Quite apart from the issue of US claims, there have been indications that some Cuban party officials are apprehensive of the effect a US presence on the island would have on the revolutionary fervor of the Cuban people. They worry about the deleterious impact that US culture might have on the puritanical unity the Revolution has attempted to imbue in the younger generation. Military and intelligence officers are also concerned about the security problem that a US presence and increased tourism would bring, and reportedly fear that they are unprepared to deal with it.

11. Others are likely to feel that Cuba has survived without the US for more than 15 years, and that renewal of relations would reopen the door to increasing US leverage over Cuba. Castro himself made this point emphatically in a speech on December 22, 1975, when he declared that "fortunately, we do not depend on them (the US) for anything What can they take away from us which they have not already taken away? Nothing. This can be called total impotence." Castro has exploited to good effect the image of little Cuba triumphing in spite of the continuing efforts of the North American Goliath. The existence of a full panoply of bilateral relations would restrict somewhat the range of behavior that Castro would permit himself with regard to the US without provoking some undesirable reaction. While there is no evidence of open dissent on this issue within the Cuban armed forces or Communist Party, Castro must be able credibly to present negotiations to them as having been arranged essentially on his terms.

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Soviet Interests

12. The Soviets apparently favor normalization of relations, but they do not appear to be pressing the Cubans to come to terms with the US. An accommodation would serve certain Soviet interests by:

- reducing US concern over developments in the Caribbean while leaving the Soviet-Cuban military and political relationship virtually unchanged, and
- opening up a major market for Cuban goods, thereby helping to strengthen Cuba's economy and eventually diminishing economic dependence on the USSR.

13. While there is no formal treaty tie between Cuba and the USSR similar to the mutual defense treaties the Soviets have with the East European communist states, Cuba is dependent on the Soviets militarily—a relationship that is underscored by Cuba's attendance (as an observer, not a member) at Warsaw Pact meetings. Economically Cuba is formally linked with the Soviet bloc through membership in the Council on Economic Mutual Assistance. Neither Moscow nor Cuba would want these relationships weakened as a condition or result of normalization of relations with the US.

14. Cuba unquestionably represents an economic drain on the Soviet Union. The USSR's economic and military subsidies in the form of raw materials and a wide range of products are now valued at about \$4 million a day. The Soviet Union accounted for nearly two-thirds of Cuba's export sales in 1976, up from about 35 percent in 1974 and 55 percent in 1975. The USSR provides Cuba with a substantial subsidy by paying higher than world market prices for Cuban sugar and nickel and by selling petroleum to Cuba at a significant discount below the world price, in addition to providing credits for balancing the bilateral trade deficit. This economic assistance represented about \$750 million in 1975 and probably increased to about \$1.3 billion in 1976. Of this total, only the trade credits (\$65 million in 1975 and \$110 million in 1976) are to be repaid. Military assistance, which totals over \$1 billion, amounted to \$38 million in 1975 and \$86.5 million in 1976. Nonetheless, the Soviets derive valuable returns from their sizable investment through Cuba's actions in the Third World in promoting parallel Cuban and Soviet interests. They also profit from the use of Cuban soil for Soviet military purposes including electronic surveillance of the US, reconnaissance base-rights, and

bunkering facilities. The Soviets evidently consider the strategic and political value of having a Soviet presence in the Western Hemisphere well worth the cost.

Cuban Preconditions

15. Castro's preconditions for beginning official talks are in essence that:

- the US must remove restrictions on trade with Cuba, and
- Cuba must be dealt with as an equal in negotiations.

The latter point is intended to convey that the essential elements of its foreign or domestic policies will not become issues of negotiation. These would include: Cuba's relationship with the Soviet Union (particularly the military relationship), its support of "progressive" governments and revolutionary movements, and Cuban political prisoners.

16. To the extent that the Cubans obtain US acceptance of their preconditions, they will have achieved much, if not most, of what they want before the official negotiations have even begun. Other Cuban goals (return of Guantanamo and cessation of overflights) have a lower priority and can be negotiated at a leisurely pace, as far as the Cubans are concerned.

17. The Cubans may now believe the US is sufficiently interested in following through on negotiations and that further inducements in the form of modifications of Cuba's position on the embargo are no longer necessary. Nevertheless, there is probably more flexibility in the Cuban position than appears at first glance. Castro would likely agree to:

- initiate preliminary talks on the modalities of further negotiations if the US permitted shipments of food and medicines to Cuba, and
- negotiate seriously on other issues if the US agreed to permit direct trade in other nonstrategic goods.

The Cubans would probably insist on an agreement in principle to remove all restrictions eventually.

18. Castro's insistence that any negotiations be carried out on the basis of complete equality points up a major theoretical as well as practical obstacle to improving US-Cuban relations. Castro has consistently refused to accept what he considers a double

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standard of international behavior for major and minor powers. This appears in:

- his invocation of the "international principle" that permits military assistance to friendly countries threatened by third powers, and
- his charges that the US is guilty of hypocrisy in demanding withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angola.

Castro is extremely sensitive to any suggestions that Cuba is less free than the major powers to pursue its national interests abroad by military action or by attempting to influence friendly governments or political groups.

19. The Cubans are likely to reject out of hand any US demands that Cuban troops be withdrawn from Angola and elsewhere, or that Havana provide guarantees against future involvement in southern Africa or elsewhere. Similarly, any attempt to include the subject of Cuban political prisoners will almost certainly be met with a categoric and unyielding refusal.

Cuban Negotiating Strategy

20. It is possible that the Cubans would like to restore diplomatic relations relatively early in the negotiating process, leaving other questions such as US claims for expropriated property to be settled at a later date. They may calculate that such an arrangement would permit bilateral trade long before any final agreement on the compensation problem had been reached and therefore would not immediately tie up earnings from sugar sales in compensation payments.

21. While the Cubans are apparently willing to consider US claims, they will present their own itemized list of demands. These will include indemnifications for damages resulting from the trade embargo, US-sponsored raids and sabotage, and inadequate tax payments by US corporations prior to 1959. The sum will probably exceed the \$1.8 billion in adjudicated US claims. Cuba's always limited ability to pay any substantial compensation is even less than it was in 1975, because of low sugar prices and other economic strains.

22. The Cubans would probably receive favorably and reciprocate US gestures to improve the atmosphere prior to opening official talks, but they cannot be expected to back down very far on their preconditions. If that hurdle can be passed, they

probably would be amenable to almost any approach that the US wishes to take on the other outstanding issues.

23. Fidel Castro will not be directly involved in negotiations, but he will make all major decisions on Cuban strategy and negotiating positions and on how the process will be presented to the Cuban public. He will be influenced by his brother Raul (representing the interests of the armed forces) and Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, the Vice President of the Council of State (who will be closely attuned to Soviet views).

The Problem of Exile Terrorism

24. The unpredictable factor in this delicate interplay is the threat of Cuban exile terrorism. In the not unlikely event that exile terrorists succeed in carrying off another spectacular act of violence like the Cubana Airlines explosion of last October, Castro will be faced with a decision of whether to ignore the provocation and accept US assurances of noninvolvement or to portray it as another evidence of US perfidy. His decision would depend largely on the climate of discussions and progress achieved and on the prosecution of exile terrorists already under arrest.

25. Although Castro has attempted to exploit past US connections with the exile organizations for propaganda purposes, his accusations of US complicity are not entirely for dramatic effect. Given his experiences with US-sponsored operations against his regime and against himself, he would probably conclude that the US was somehow implicated in the exile attacks—if not by direct support, then by acquiescence and tacit approval. Castro may believe, however, that rapprochement would give the US an interest in restricting exile activities.

II. THE MAJOR ISSUES FOR NEGOTIATION

26. The Cubans are interested in obtaining an agreement with the US which would cover both economic and politico-military issues. There would appear to be a clear linkage between the economic issues to be tabled by both sides, and the politico-military questions might also be grouped together in discussions. The likely Cuban position on these issues is summarized as follows.

US Trade Restrictions

27. For discussions to reach the stage of full negotiations, much of the trade restriction issue will

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probably have to be resolved during the preliminary talks. The Cuban position on this precondition is presented in paragraph 15 above. The compromise envisaged would be based on presidential waiver of restrictions and might leave the legal apparatus of the trade restrictions intact. The Cubans' ultimate goal would be the removal of all vestiges of the embargo.

Most Favored Nation Status

28. Cuba remains a member in good standing of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), and in the Cuban view the bilateral trade agreement with the US signed in 1947 within the GATT framework is still in effect. Cuba holds that the US has been in violation of GATT since it first suspended MFN treatment of Cuba in 1962, and that Cuba is therefore still entitled to MFN status. Cuban products entering the US at MFN tariff rates would have a competitive advantage which they would not have if MFN status were denied. Under the US Trade Reform Act of 1974, MFN status is tied to emigration policies and would require a new bilateral trade agreement. The former is not necessarily an impassable obstacle, since both Poland and Romania have been granted MFN status by the US. The basic Cuban position therefore would be that Cuban products should enter the US at MFN tariff rates effective immediately and that Cuba will reciprocate by extending similar treatment to imports from the US (in fact a largely meaningless concession). As a fallback, Cuba might agree to negotiate a new trade bilateral with the US, but in doing so would argue strenuously that its emigration policies are sufficiently flexible to qualify under the 1974 Trade Act for MFN status. Additionally, Cuba would seek generalized tariff preferences as a less-developed country and member of the Group of 77.

Control of Cuban Exile Extremists

29. The recent escalation of anti-Castro exile terrorism has increased Cuban concerns about controlling exile organizations operating out of the US. Cuba would therefore insist on a US pledge that it would:

- not intervene in Cuban internal affairs, nor engage in any aggressive act against Cuba, and
- not promote, support, or permit aggression against Cuba by exile organizations.

In return for such assurances, and providing there is evidence that the US is actively enforcing its laws

against exile terrorists, Cuba would probably agree to renegotiate the antihijacking agreement.

Cessation of Overflights

30. The overflight issue has been obviated by a recent US decision to terminate the SR-71 overflight program, but depending on when talks take place, the Cubans may or may not be aware of this fact. The Cubans can be expected to demand that all intelligence collection flights over Cuba stop immediately. Cuba would also like to see an end to peripheral reconnaissance flights outside Cuban air space, but most likely would not actively pursue the issue. Nonhostile reactions to such flights will probably occur periodically as they have in the past ☐

Guantanamo

31. Cuba will certainly demand that the US evacuate Guantanamo Naval Base promptly and return the territory and its facilities to the Cuban government, on the grounds that the treaty is no longer valid. Nevertheless, the Cubans appear in no great hurry to remove the US base. They probably would accept a phased withdrawal of the US presence over a period of several years if the US agreed to pay a substantial sum for use of the territory during the phaseout period in return for a Cuban pledge not to use the base to stage or support military operations against the US. It is unlikely that Cuba would make any formal guarantee that Guantanamo would not become a foreign military base since Cuba would regard such an agreement as an infringement of its sovereignty.³

Indemnification

32. The Cubans will almost certainly present claims for damages resulting from:

- loss of markets and sources of supply due to US-imposed sanctions,
- the Bay of Pigs invasion,

³ Some analysts in the Community believe, however, that Cuba would give private and informal assurances that Guantanamo would not become a foreign base.

- sabotage by agents employed by and/or based in the US; and
- inadequate tax payments by US corporations prior to 1959.

While it is impossible to estimate the value the Cubans will place on these claims, it will probably initially be some figure that would exceed anticipated US claims, i.e., in the neighborhood of \$2 billion. It is unlikely that the Cubans have any genuine expectations of being able to collect such an amount, but they undoubtedly will regard their claims as serious and will attempt to use them to cancel out US claims for expropriated property. Cuba will demand that the US free all frozen Cuban assets, including accrued interest. There will probably be very little flexibility on this point, although there may be some question about the actual value of these assets, which we believe is about \$35 million. The Cubans might be willing to apply them against US claims.

III. POSTURE ON EXPECTED US DEMANDS

33. The Cuban government is almost certainly expecting US demands regarding compensation for expropriated US properties, Cuban support for revolutionary movements, Cuba's military relationship with the USSR and nuclear status, advocacy of Puerto Rican independence, human rights, and the restoration of the antihijacking agreement. The following paragraphs discuss Cuba's likely posture on these issues.

Compensation

34. The Cuban government has acknowledged the principle of compensation for nationalized properties, but probably considers the nearly \$2 billion total of US adjudicated claims to be an inflated figure. It will therefore seek to reduce the value of US claims as much as possible and balance them off against Cuban counterclaims. The Cubans are likely to argue that US claims should be based on the book value of US investments, which the US Department of Commerce set at the end of 1960 at only \$956 million, or 53 percent of the figure recognized by the US Claims Settlement Commission.

35. Cuba's economic straits caused by the depressed world price of sugar have further reduced its always limited ability to pay compensation for expropriated US property. There is virtually no prospect that Cuba will have a current account

surplus to finance compensation. Any repayment would have to be facilitated by US credits granted at very favorable terms. Cuba has indicated it will not consider individual claims and would therefore insist on a package settlement to be distributed by the US Government among the claimants.

Support for Revolutionary Movements

36. Castro and other top Cuban officials certainly understand that further military interventions in Africa or elsewhere would have a sharply negative effect on any movement toward normalization. They will, however, continue to insist on Cuba's right to provide military, internal security, and technical assistance at the request of legitimate governments, and they will not abjure aid to other "movements of national liberation."⁴

37. As noted in paragraphs 18 and 19, Castro would almost certainly reject any US demands to withdraw Cuban troops from Angola. At the same time, he would claim that his troops are being repatriated and replaced by civilian advisers. The Cubans are likely to counter with demands that the US renounce overt or covert intervention in other countries. Castro is unlikely to accept any formulation on "export of revolution" beyond a pro forma statement on refraining from interfering in the internal affairs of other countries.

Relationship with the USSR and Nuclear Status

38. Cuba's basic position will probably be that its relationship with the Soviet Union is a matter of national sovereignty and therefore not a subject for negotiation with the US. Cuba will insist that there

⁴ Estimated Cuban military and civilian advisers in Third World countries are:

Africa		Middle East	
Total	15,000-20,000	Total	830
Algeria	12-24	South Yemen	650
Angola	10,000-14,500	Iraq	150-185
Congo	100-150	<i>Far East</i>	
Equatorial Guinea	300-400	Total	400
Guinea-Bissau	100	Laos	100
Guinea	300-500	Vietnam	200-300
Madagascar	12-24	<i>Caribbean/Latin America</i>	
Mozambique	500-600	Total	120
Sao Tome and Principe	12	Guyana	50-75
Sierra Leone	30	Jamaica	15
Somalia	200-300	Panama	12-24
Tanzania	350-500	Peru	4

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are no Soviet military bases in Cuba, and that the presence of Soviet military personnel, visits of Soviet warships, or reconnaissance aircraft to the Caribbean region are not proper subjects for the negotiations.

39. The Cubans would probably follow the Soviet lead on the question of nuclear nonproliferation, and there is no indication that they are opposed to the Nonproliferation Treaty or regional nuclear-free zone agreements as a matter of principle. Cuba might, therefore, be willing to sign the Treaty of Tlatelolco, but may attempt to tie such action to US adherence to Protocol I of that accord which would prohibit the stationing of nuclear weapons in Latin America.

Puerto Rico

40. There is virtually no prospect that Cuba will alter its basic position in support of Puerto Rican independence. Nevertheless, the Cubans understand that in the US view, Puerto Rico is an internal matter, and they realistically do not expect Puerto Rico to gain independence except over an extended period of time. Cuba's promotion of this issue in the UN and other international forums has varied widely in intensity. The Cubans made only a limited effort to exploit former President Ford's proposal of statehood for Puerto Rico, and recently Cuba has been noticeably less aggressive in pushing Puerto Rican independence in the UN Committee of 24. The Cubans have given indications that they would show some flexibility on this subject, perhaps going so far as to give private assurances that they will not press hard for UN observer status for the Puerto Rican Socialist Party. It is unlikely, however, that Havana's ties with that group will be severed. Cuba would almost certainly deny any US charge that it supports Puerto Rican terrorists, but might discourage Puerto Rican independence groups from provocative activity during negotiations with the US.⁵

Human Rights

41. The Cubans would probably be willing to discuss some issues under the general rubric of human rights (e.g., repatriation of American citizens, reunifi-

⁵ The FBI has identified six leaders of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party who received training in Cuba in sabotage and urban terrorism between 1973 and 1976 and who have returned to Puerto Rico. Three other members of the Puerto Rican Socialist Party were recently arrested in possession of 1,300 pounds of an explosive called breimite. All had previously traveled to Cuba.

cation of families, emigration, and visits), but any attempt to include the subject of Cuban political prisoners will almost certainly be met with a categorical and unyielding refusal on grounds that it is an internal matter. Cuban officials have suggested that they might be willing to release some or all of the eight American citizens now in prison on political charges in return for US removal of restrictions on sale of food and medicines. They might also agree to release as a good will gesture Americans being held on drug smuggling charges.

42. In part because restrictions on movement of people are linked to US trade preferences, Cuba may be expected to show some increased flexibility on travel and emigration, perhaps facilitating exit visas for US citizens or dual nationals still resident in Cuba and relatives of emigres. Cuba may also ease restrictions on visits from US residents, but fears of exile activities will probably strictly limit the number of persons admitted for this purpose. Despite Cuba's refusal to discuss political prisoners and its official position that political prisoners do not exist in Cuba, Castro is well aware of the importance attached to this issue in the US and might, therefore, release a limited number of people for cosmetic purposes without linking their release to the negotiations.

The Hijacking Agreement

43. Castro has indicated to recent visitors that the 1973 antihijacking agreement will be allowed to lapse on April 15 in accordance with his denunciation of last October, but he will continue to observe its provisions informally. As noted above, the Cubans have shown a willingness to renegotiate the agreement, but only in the context of the original 1973 treaty, which contains clear responsibilities for the US to discourage terrorism by exiles residing in the US.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

44. The process of normalizing US-Cuban relations will be protracted and difficult, and the issues and sensitivities involved are highly complex. The term "normalization" may, in fact, be somewhat misleading, since the two countries' opposing social systems and political philosophies will limit the relationship for many years to come. Equally important is the emotional factor which has developed during nearly 17 years of hostile relations and which often tends to magnify misunderstandings and complicate accommodations. The relationship is not likely to be without friction even in the best of circumstances, and Castro

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can be expected to continue his opposition to US influence in the hemisphere and his support of political and social revolution in other countries.

45. An additional factor limiting normalization is the Soviet Union's use of Cuba to further its own objectives. The USSR would, for example, insist on maintaining its strategic position in the Caribbean including bunkering facilities for Soviet submarines at

Cienfuegos, the Soviet-controlled electronic monitoring facilities in Cuba, and landing rights for TU-95 reconnaissance missions. On the other hand, a gradual reduction of mistrust could work to strengthen Cuba's sense of national confidence over the long term and thereby attenuate Cuba's symbiotic relationship with the Soviet Union if Havana found it economically feasible.

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- h. Director of NSA, for the National Security Agency
- i. Special Assistant to the Secretary for National Security, for the Department of the Treasury
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